

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently Amended) A breast shield set for pumping off human breast milk, the breast shield set comprising a breast shield, a breast shield connector with a threaded attachment for connection to a milk collection vessel, and a valve for limiting a dead volume during pumping off of breast milk, wherein the valve has a valve seat and a valve body with a circular diaphragm, the valve body being arranged over the valve seat and closing the valve seat sealingly when it bears on said valve seat, and the valve seat and valve body having openings which are offset relative to one another and which form a free passage when the diaphragm of the valve body lifts, wherein said openings of the diaphragm of the valve body comprise narrow elongate openings with a long dimension and which are uniformly distributed adjacent the periphery of the diaphragm, and wherein the narrow elongate openings are separated from one another by webs, the diaphragm being designed to be weaker in the area adjacent to these webs and wherein said openings of the diaphragm further comprise compact openings which are present in areas generally between said narrow elongate openings, with said compact openings being smaller than said narrow elongate openings and having a part that extends adjacent said periphery and another part that extends generally radially relative to a center of said diaphragm.

19. (Previously Presented) The breast shield set as claimed in claim 18, in which the valve seat of the valve can be fitted onto the breast shield connector or is formed integrally on the breast shield connector.

20. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which the breast shield connector, the breast shield and the valve seat are made from an autoclavable material and the valve body is made from a non-autoclavable material.

21. (Currently Amended) The breast shield set as claimed in claim 20, in which the autoclavable material is polypropylene (PP) and the non-autoclavable material is a thermoplastic elastomer (TPE).

22-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently Amended) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which a the circle has a center point that coincides with the center point of the circular diaphragm.

26. (Currently Amended) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which the narrow elongate openings form a common circular ring whose width is a multiple smaller than the smaller radius of the circular ring and which is provided with webs.

27. (Currently Amended) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which exactly three narrow elongate openings and exactly three webs are present.

28. (Canceled)

29. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which the compact openings have a T-shaped configuration.

30. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which the compact openings are arranged in the weakened area of the diaphragm.

31. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 29, wherein the T-shaped openings each have a foot and a bar extending transversely over the foot, and in which the foot is oriented toward the webs and radially toward a center point of the circle of the diaphragm.

32. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which the valve body has a cylindrical jacket that surrounds the diaphragm.

33. (Currently Amended) The breast shield as claimed in claim 32, wherein the diaphragm except for the narrow elongate openings and compact openings and weakened areas, is designed as a plane, closed disk, which is connected circumferentially to the cylindrical jacket.

34. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 32, in which the jacket has at least one notch extending parallel to a center axis of the cylindrical jacket.

35. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 32, in which the cylindrical jacket has an inner face provided with at least one groove extending at least partially about the circumference.

36. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 32, in which the cylindrical jacket is provided with a bead extending at least partially about the circumference.

37. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which the valve seat has a plane surface with a central opening and with openings extending around this central opening, the extending openings being interrupted by webs.

38. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 18, in which at least one part of the valve is made from a non-autoclavable material.

39. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 38, in which the valve body is made from a non-autoclavable material.

40. (Previously Presented) The breast shield as claimed in claim 39, in which the valve body is made from a thermoplastic elastomer (TPE).

41. (Currently Amended) A breast shield set for pumping off human breast milk, the breast shield set comprising a breast shield, a breast shield connector with a threaded attachment for connection to a milk collection vessel, and a valve for limiting a dead volume during pumping off of breast milk, wherein the valve has a valve seat and a valve body with a circular diaphragm, the valve body being arranged over the valve seat and closing the valve seat sealingly when it bears on said valve seat, and the valve seat and valve body having openings which are offset relative to one another and which form a free passage when the diaphragm of the valve body lifts, wherein said openings of the diaphragm of the valve body comprise narrow elongate openings which are uniformly distributed and follow a circle adjacent the periphery of the diaphragm, and wherein the narrow elongate openings are separated from one another by webs, the diaphragm being designed to be weaker in the area adjacent to these webs, and

wherein said narrow elongate openings are arc-shaped comprising a longitudinal dimension extending along said circle.

42. (Currently Amended) A breast shield set for pumping off human breast milk, the breast shield set comprising a breast shield, a breast shield connector with a threaded attachment for connection to a milk collection vessel, and a valve for limiting a dead volume during pumping off of breast milk, wherein the valve has a valve seat and a valve body with a circular diaphragm, the valve body being arranged over the valve seat and closing the valve seat sealingly when it bears on said valve seat, and the valve seat and valve body having openings which are offset relative to one another and which form a free passage when the diaphragm of the valve body lifts, wherein said openings of the diaphragm of the valve body comprise narrow elongate openings which are uniformly distributed and follow a circle adjacent the periphery of the diaphragm, and where the narrow elongate openings are separated from one another by webs, the diaphragm being designed to be weaker in the area adjacent to these webs, and

wherein the diaphragm comprises thinned parts in the area adjacent to these webs, these thinned parts making the diaphragm weaker in this area.

43. (Currently Amended) A breast shield set for pumping off human breast milk, the breast shield set comprising a breast shield, a breast shield connector with a threaded attachment for connection to a milk collection vessel, and a valve for limiting a dead volume during pumping off of breast milk, wherein the valve has a valve seat and a valve body with a circular diaphragm, the valve body being arranged over the valve seat and closing the valve seat sealingly when it bears on said valve seat, and the valve seat and valve body having openings which are offset relative to one another and which form a free passage when the diaphragm of the valve body lifts, wherein said openings of the diaphragm of the valve body comprise narrow elongate openings which are uniformly distributed along a circle in the periphery of the diaphragm, and wherein the narrow elongate openings are separated from one another by webs, the diaphragm being designed to be weaker in the area adjacent to these webs, and

wherein the valve body comprises the diaphragm and a cylindrical jacket that surrounds the diaphragm, wherein the valve body is an unitary part and has the same basic shape as the valve seat, and wherein the jacket can be fitted over the valve seat.